

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-7, 9 and 11 are currently pending.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 2, 3 AND 7 UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER THE ADMITTED PRIOR ART IN VIEW OF TOKAI AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF TODOKORO

The present invention as recited, for example, in claim 1 as presented in the previous Amendment filed April 5, 2006, relates to a light-emitting tube array display device comprising (a) a light-emitting tube array constituted of a plurality of light-emitting tubes arranged in parallel with discharge gas filled therein; (b) a light-transmitting supporter abutting a display surface side of the light-emitting tube array for supporting the light-emitting tube array and having electrodes, crossing the light emitting tubes and formed on a surface of the supporter facing the light-emitting tube array, for applying a voltage to the light-emitting tubes; (c) a phosphor layer formed on a rear side inner wall of each light-emitting tube; (d) a light-transmitting adhesive layer formed between the supporter and the light-emitting tube array; (e) a rear side substrate abutting a surface of each light-emitting tube so that the light-emitting tube array is held between the supporter and the rear side substrate; (f) electrodes formed on a surface of the rear side substrate facing the light-emitting tubes and extending in a direction crossing the electrodes formed on the surface of the supporter; and (g) a resin layer filled into a space formed by display surface sides of the light-emitting tubes and the supporter.

As recited, for example, in claim 1 as presented in the previous Amendment filed April 5, 2006, the adhesive layer has a refractive index equal to or higher than that of a tube body of each light-emitting tube.

Please note that claim 1 as presented in the previous Amendment filed April 5, 2006, recites a resin layer filled into a space formed by display surface sides of the light-emitting tubes and the supporter. By filling the resin layer into this space, the influence of total internal reflection is eliminated at the interface between the light-emitting tubes and air. See, for example, page 14, lines 22-26; and page 19, lines 7-24, of the present application. See also, for example, space 6 in FIG. 6 of the present application.

The Examiner asserts that paragraph [0067] of Tokai discloses a resin layer formed in a space formed by the light-emitting tubes and the supporter.

However, it is respectfully submitted that paragraph [0067] of Tokai merely describes that

"the outer surface of the glass tube 410 can be coated with an acrylic resin, a silicone resin or other transparent material."

Moreover, the resin layer in Tokai is simply provided on the outer surface of the glass tube to enhance the intensity of illumination of the glass tube. See, for example, paragraph [0067] of Tokai.

Therefore, the positioning and use of a resin layer in Tokai is significantly different than that recited, for example, in claim 1 as presented in the previous Amendment filed April 5, 2006.

In summary, paragraph [0067] of Tokai does not disclose a resin layer filled into a space formed by display surface sides of the light-emitting tubes and the supporter as recited, for example, in claim 1 as presented in the previous Amendment filed April 5, 2006.

* * *

The above comments were presented in the Amendment filed April 5, 2006. However, in item 10 on page 11 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the arguments are not persuasive.

More specifically, the Examiner indicates that he considers that, in Tokai, the resin layer coating on the outer surface of the glass tube would constitute a resin layer filled into a space formed by the display surface sides of the light-emitting tubes and the supporter.

In response, it is respectfully submitted that the resin layer coating on the glass tube in Tokai would only occupy a small portion of a space formed by the display surface sides of the light-emitting tubes and the supporter. More specifically, the resin layer would only occupy a tiny portion of the space equal to the thickness of the resin layer and only over a portion of the circumference of the glass tube that forms the space. Clearly, the resin layer coating in Tokai does not "fill in" a space formed by the display surface sides of the light-emitting tubes and the supporter.

Moreover, to further distinguish over Tokai, claim 1 is amended to recite that the resin layer is filled into the space formed by display surface sides of *adjacent* light-emitting tubes and the supporter, *to thereby eliminate total internal reflection of light emitted from the adjacent light-emitting tubes into the space that would occur due to air that would be in the space if the resin layer was not filled into the space.*

Similar amendments are made to claims 2 and 3. Support for the amendments is found, for example, on page 14, lines 22-26; page 18, lines 14-21; and page 19, lines 7-24, of the present application. See also, for example, space 6 in FIG. 6 of the present application.

It is respectfully submitted that the resin layer coated on the outer surface of the glass tube in Tokai does not provide such features.

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The above comments are specifically directed to claim 1. However, it is respectfully submitted that the comments would be helpful in understanding differences of various other claims over the cited references.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

III. REJECTION OF CLAIM 4 UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER THE ADMITTED PRIOR ART IN VIEW OF TOKAI, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF TODOKORA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF BHAGAVATULA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF KOIKE

The comments in Section II, above, also apply here, where appropriate.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

IV. REJECTION OF CLAIM 5 UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER THE ADMITTED PRIOR ART IN VIEW OF TOKAI, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF TODOKORA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF HIROSHI

The comments in Section II, above, also apply here, where appropriate.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

V. REJECTION OF CLAIM 6 UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER THE ADMITTED PRIOR ART IN VIEW OF TOKAI, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF TODOKORO, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF HIROSHI, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF BHAGAVATULA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF KOIKE AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF KUBOTA

The comments in Section II, above, also apply here, where appropriate.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

VI. REJECTION OF CLAIM 9 UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER THE ADMITTED PRIOR ART IN VIEW OF TOKAI, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF TODOKORA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF KUBOTA

The comments in Section II, above, also apply here, where appropriate.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

VII. REJECTION OF CLAIM 11 UNDER 35 USC 103 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER THE ADMITTED PRIOR ART IN VIEW OF TOKAI, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF TODOKORA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF BHAGAVATULA, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF KOIKE, AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF KUBOTA

The comments in Section II, above, also apply here, where appropriate.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

VIII. CONCLUSION

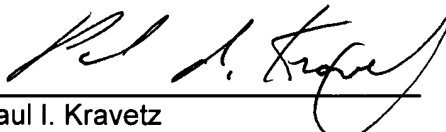
In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If any further fees are required in connection with the filing of this response, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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